



BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

FIFTH BIMSTEC SUMMIT DECLARATION

30 March 2022

Colombo, Sri Lanka

We, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan; the Prime Minister of the Republic of India; the Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; the Prime Minister of Nepal; the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand; met (*virtually*) in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 30 March 2022 for the Fifth BIMSTEC Summit, and

Reaffirming our firm commitment to the principles and purposes of BIMSTEC as contained in the Bangkok Declaration of 1997;

Recalling the First BIMSTEC Summit Declaration (Bangkok, 31 July 2004), the Second Summit Declaration (New Delhi, 13 November 2008), the Third Summit Declaration (Nay Pyi Taw, 4 March 2014), the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat Outcome Document (Goa, 16 October 2016) and the Fourth Summit Declaration (Kathmandu, 30-31 August 2018);

Noting with satisfaction the evolution of BIMSTEC as a distinctive regional organization of the Bay of Bengal nations with increased membership, expanded mandate, formal institutional arrangements and norms while retaining its unique character as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia;

Being convinced that the adoption of the BIMSTEC Charter and approval of the reconstituted Sectors and Sub-Sectors of cooperation has provided our organization with a solid footing allowing us to move to a higher level of cooperation wherein implementation of concrete programs and projects to produce tangible economic benefits for our peoples will dominate BIMSTEC's activities;

Noting that the devastating impact of the COVID19 pandemic on our health, economy and society has created a renewed sense of urgency for leveraging geographical advantage and available resources in the BIMSTEC region to spur economic activities and address vulnerabilities in the post-COVID 19 recovery and rehabilitation process;

Noting with appreciation that the Member States are forcefully responding to the challenges posed by the pandemic by strengthening health system, providing income support for the poor and offering incentive packages to the businesses;

Do hereby:

1. **Encourage** Member States to continue to support one another in combating COVID 19 through the BIMSTEC framework as well as bilaterally to foster the spirit of BIMSTEC solidarity.
2. **Resolve** to intensify regional cooperation to strengthen economic and physical connectivity to enhance regional trade, investment, tourism, technology, energy and other forms of exchanges, including to offset the economic losses caused by the pandemic.
3. **Resolve** to strengthen our collective resilience to combat the challenges of poverty, natural disasters, climate change, pandemics, and all other public health emergencies, terrorism and transnational crimes, and ensure food and energy security through partnership and joint actions, in parallel to the implementation toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, keeping in mind that COVID 19 may not be the last calamity to befall our region.
4. **Note** the progress achieved in implementing directives given by us at the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit and **instruct** prompt implementation of the remaining directives.
5. **Adopt** the BIMSTEC Charter and approve the reconstituted Sectors and Sub-Sectors of cooperation.
6. **Instruct** the BIMSTEC Secretariat to develop Plans of Action in consultation with Lead Countries of the reconstituted Sectors and Sub-Sectors to guide their activities and to establish necessary institutional mechanisms to carry out their respective mandates.
7. **Reiterate** our commitment to timely holding of the Summit and meetings of all BIMSTEC mechanisms.
8. **Urge** the Member States to expedite conclusion of pending legal instruments and ratify the legal instruments that have already been signed.
9. **Instruct** the Ministerial Meeting to coordinate implementation of our decisions and report to the next Summit.
10. **Approve** the Joint Statement of the Seventeenth Ministerial Meeting and the Report of the Eighteenth Ministerial Meeting for implementation of the decisions and recommendations contained therein.

11. **Welcome** the signing of the following legal instruments:
 - (i) BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.
 - (ii) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Mutual Cooperation between Diplomatic Academies/Training Institutions of BIMSTEC Member States.
 - (iii) Memorandum of Association on the Establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF) in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
12. **Adopt** the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity as recommended by the Ministerial Meeting.
13. **Appreciate** the decision of the Government of Bangladesh to expand the existing office space of the Secretariat by constructing a modern building with appropriate facilities at the same location.
14. **Welcome** the appointment of Mr. Tenzin Lekphell of Bhutan as the third Secretary General of BIMSTEC for the term of 2020-2023 with effect from 06 November 2020.
15. **Express** our appreciation to Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, former Secretary General of BIMSTEC from Bangladesh for his valuable contribution.
16. **Express** our deep appreciation to Sri Lanka for its excellent leadership and valuable contribution during its Chairmanship of BIMSTEC.
17. **Welcome** Thailand as the next Chair of BIMSTEC and offer our full cooperation to the new Chair.
18. **Express** our profound appreciation to the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.
